*Proposed New Sewers in Kensington.*—A deputation of inhabitants of Church-street, Holland-street, &c., Kensington, attended the court this day, to support two memorials presented by them in opposition to the works proposed to be carried into effect in the above parish, in pursuance of the recommendation of the surveyor. Mr. Rainham, a solicitor, of Fenchurch-street, appeared for the memorialists, and stated that the opposition of the inhabitants of this district rested mainly on two grounds, viz., that they at present possessed a very efficient drainage; and, secondly, that if the plan proposed by this court was adopted, a well, which supplied a great number of the inhabitants with a pure and abundant supply of water would be entirely destroyed. He contended that the report contained statements altogether erroneous, for a better drainage could not exist, and as a proof of it, he would mention a fact, that one of the sewers at present used by them had not required cleansing for the last twenty years, and he would prove that fact by the evidence of the parties resident on the premises.

Mr. Russell, Mr. Lawrence, Mr. S. Bird, and others, were then examined, to prove that there was at present a very efficient drainage.

Mr. Willoughby wished to know whether, because the witnesses were satisfied with the present mode of drainage, that was any reason the court should depart from the scheme laid down? No doubt parties could be found who were very well satisfied with things as they were, as was the case with parties in Watling-street, in the City, who had gone on for years with cesspools in every house: they, it was true, found it rather inconvenient at first, but at last got used to the stench arising therefrom. He hoped they would not be deterred by considerations of the nature here presented, from carrying on the work if they were satisfied it was for the benefit of the district at large; that no considerations of individual injury should deter that court from doing its duty in carrying out such measures as were for the general benefit. He concluded by moving that the recommendations of the surveyor be confirmed.

Other commissioners took the same view of the case.

Mr. Gunter said, so bad was the drainage of the district, that a short time since it was necessary to open the tomb of a near relative of his in Kensington old churchyard, when it was found more than three parts full of water, and the coffin was floating! He was in favour of the proposed plan.

Mr. Hawkes said he had listened attentively to the hon. commissioner near him (Mr. Willoughby), and argument more arbitrary or tyrannical he had never heard in his life. Not the slightest inconvenience had been experienced by any one, and the report was entirely false. Without rhyme or reason, without the slightest pretence for their interference, they were about to inflict the greatest possible injury, without the most remote chance of good. No one was suffering, the people of Kensington sought not their interference, and they would confer no public advantage, and he trusted their first step under their increased powers would not be one of cruelty and tyranny.

The chairman having requested any commissioner who had interest in the question to retire during the voting, the last speaker withdrew, and the motion was carried unanimously.

## New Books.

*The Epochs of Painting Characterized; a Sketch of the History of Painting.* By Ralph N. Wornum. Cox, King William-street, Strand.

Under this title the essay on painting in "The Pictorial Gallery of Arts," to which we have already alluded, forms two of "Knight's Shilling Volumes for all readers." It may be safely recommended as a clear and well-written sketch, necessarily brief in parts, as it comprehends a review of the progress of painting in every country where the art has obtained a cogoizable degree of development, extending over a period of nearly 3,000 years, and including biographical notices of many of the most eminent painters. It displays an intimate knowledge of the subject, and considerable learning. The following view of art in Germany, which concludes the essay, may be advantageously quoted.

"There is now every prospect of a third great development of art, which will certainly happen much within the term of two thousand years, the interval between its first and second periods. Germany has already assumed a high position in the sentiment of art; in France the technical development is perfect; and for England likewise the dawn of a great future is appearing. Germany has long taken the lead in the sentiment of art, though unfortunately its sentiment is alloyed with convention and affectation. Asmus Jacob Carstens was one of the earliest artists of Germany who forsook the mere mechanical routine of his time and entered earnestly into the utmost capabilities of art. Carstens was followed by a still more remarkable man, Friedrich Overbeck, who has had a surprising influence upon the German artists of his time. A style, however, so purely conventional as Overbeck's can have but a transient reign, though as a means of conducting the artist from a mere academic mechanism to a contemplation of the real capability and destiny of painting, it has performed a valuable service. This style is more representative than imitative, is symbolical in its motive, and symmetrical in its outward development or external form. It appears to owe its peculiar development partly to the notion that to attain to the excellence of the great *cinquecento* masters at the commencement of the sixteenth century, a restoration of the *quattrocento* style is necessary (though with Overbeck the style is doubtless final), inferring that, as the *quattrocento* immediately preceded the *cinquecento*, and in so far led to it, it is the only road to that high development of art: such a fallacy requires no refutation. Some theorists maintain the *quattrocento* to be a higher development: it is nothing more than an incipient state of art, which requires a certain amount of knowledge; and when the barrier which lies between it and the more complete development is once surmounted, its use is accomplished. If a higher degree of knowledge is once attained, a perseverance in the restoration of such a form of art is to retrograde. This position has been practically illustrated by some of the most ardent advocates of this sentimental revival. The case of Erwin Speckter is sufficient. This painter originally a devoted admirer of Overbeck, and indeed wholly absorbed by his style while living in his native district in the north of Germany, and during the whole period of his career, previous to his residence at Rome, experienced, upon his intimate acquaintance with that capital of the arts, a perfect revolution in taste, and wholly changed not only his style, but his very subject, so great was the reaction in his mind from the artificial thraldom in which it had been enveloped. The essential attraction of art, as an embodiment of nature, gradually drew him from the abstract conventional system that he had identified himself with, in which art was only secondary to a peculiar sentiment independent of it, to the art itself and for its own sake. And Speckter's transition from convention to nature is far from being singular in the history of modern German art. Overbeck's style however is but one form of the great present development of painting in Germany, though it more or less characterises the style of many of her greatest artists; but the purely historic art has likewise its votaries: as a school that of Düsseldorf is the most *sentimental*. To this school belong Bendemann, Lessing, Stilke, Sohn, and many other eminent masters in various departments of art, as Hübner and others, among whom the landscape painters are very conspicuous. Cornelius, Schnorr, Hess, and Kaulbach, all painters who owe much to the patronage of the truly royal munificence of Ludwig I. of Bavaria, are each in themselves a host, and sufficient to confer dignity in their respective walks on any school whatever. May the recent movement of the British Government in the cause of art prove the harbinger of a great future for this country!"

*A Handbook for Visiters to Oxford.* Oxford: J. H. Parker.

A guide-book of very superior pretensions, illustrated by a hundred beautiful wood-cuts of all the principal buildings and monuments in time-honoured and most picturesque Oxford. It contains, likewise, a plan, shewing the relative position of every building. Those of our readers who have not visited Oxford have a delightful excursion in store, and will find their pleasure increased fourfold if they take with them Mr. Parker's guide.

## Correspondence.

### Geometric System of the Ancient Architects.

Sir,—In your journal of the 24th ultimo, I observed a letter from Mr. John Browne, drawing-master, of York, which I did not suppose was a prelude to the attack he has made on me in your last number [but one].

I must beg to trouble you with a short reply, in justice to myself as an architect, having been, from 1807 to 1814, under articles to the late Sir John Soane, and having erected many public and private works long before Mr. Browne was introduced to me, about 1828.

In 1829, during a few hours passed in York, after the conflagration of the cathedral choir, he shewed me a MS. and a diagram described by me, *which, he repeats*, "consists of a circle, four right angles, and three vesicæ" (*if three, the last was mysteriously withheld*), and all I could make of his explanation was, that it appeared an ingenious hieroglyphic of the *Creed of St. Athanasius*,* of which his letter breathes the exclusive spirit, of times happily gone by. Since then I have seen little more of my *friend* Browne than for a few minutes during my casual visits at York, (being a subscriber to his work, so favourably mentioned in my paper read at the Royal Institute of British Architects, on the 14th June last), and have had no leisure to receive "instruction" from him.

When I told him I thought I had discovered the practical use of the spherical triangle, he referred me to Mr. Kerrich's "Essays in the Archæologia," which I had not seen, and though many years before that I *had* seen Mr. Hawkins's work, I did not recollect his notice of Cæsarianus, nor the diagrams you allude to, nor did Mr. Browne either name him, or hint at his "interview with Mr. Kerrich."

Mr. Browne arrogates too much, and though he may claim to be Mr. Kerrich's "instructor," I deny his accusation of my having "*persisted in obtaining, both directly and indirectly, such hints from*" his "*working scheme*" (for all his communications are carefully veiled in impenetrable mystery), and I had much better employment than to endeavour to understand his impracticabilities; he may with equal justice claim to be the fountain of all intellect, and bring the same charges against Professor Cockerell, Messrs. Cresy, Wallen, Billings, Griffith, &c., and monopolize all geometric principles at once.

"L'état, c'est moi," said Napoleon."—"L'Oracle de Science, c'est moi," saith Browne.

The diagram of the intersecting equilateral triangles within the circle, generated by the radial divisions, first struck me as an infallible system of proportion, during a ramble amongst the glorious mediæval structures of Belgium in 1839, but for two or three years afterwards, I could rarely find leisure from my professional avocations to test its properties. Subsequently I have applied it to plans, elevations, sections, and details of buildings, some published, others measured by myself; and my preliminary essay of the 14th of June last resulted from my labours, but to be fully understood all the diagrams should have accompanied its publication.

Although Mr. Browne has seen and heard me speak of my diagram (very different to what I remember of *his* wild scheme), he never so much as hinted that he claimed to be my "instructor," and the "track" which (he says) he "pointed out" to me, made so little impression as to be wholly obliterated from my memory, nor can I accuse myself of having gained one single idea from his vaunted "instruction." His scheme should have been given, with the extract from his letter, or be otherwise may appear to have no advantage over the heretic friend whom he attacks, and who may justly exclaim "save me from my friend."

Without yielding one jot to Mr. Browne's views in 1829 or his vagaries of 1847,

I remain, Sir, &c.,

R. Dennis Chantrell.

Lincoln's-inn-fields, 23rd August, 1847.

* His scriptural meaning.

### Builders' Tenders.

Sir,—As I believe the insertion of builders' estimates in your valuable paper must have a tendency to restore that business to a more

For info on OCR and PDF Compression visit our website